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NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

The National Volunteers was established in June, 1965, with the following objectives:-

- (a) to recruit, channel the efforts and ensure the efficient use of the large number of persons who want to help in the development of their country by giving funds, goods and/or service on a voluntary basis;
- (b) to identify suitable projects within the framework of our national development plan in which Voluntary Service can play a vital and productive part.

2. During 1966/67, two training courses were held for the training of 110 volunteers from varied backgrounds in general subjects, including the aims and structure of the National Volunteers, Principles of Social Work and Principles of Organisation, as well as in specific subjects related to the various projects to which the volunteers were to be assigned. 1967

3. The projects undertaken during 1966/67 included -

- (1) Youth Government - 100 selected youngsters from various youth organisations participated in a Leadership cum Youth Government 7 day camp, which enabled them to see democracy in action and involved the election of their own "Mayor for A Day".
- (2) Golden Age Clubs - 16 Golden Age Clubs for the 55-60 year old age group with a total membership of 400 and led by volunteers, have been organised. Plans have also been finalized for 5 additional clubs and for weekly programmes in the Eventide and Ozanam Homes for the Aged.
- (3) Youth Clubs - 15 Youth Clubs for unattached and un-attended young people between the ages of 15 - 25 with a total membership of 620, are led by volunteers.
- (4) General Education - 3 groups led by Volunteers, are participating in a general education programme touching a total of 70 persons. 3 other groups are soon to be started. When ready these groups will be passed on to Evening Institutes.
- (5) Home Economics - Regular weekly Home Economics programme (cookery and needlework), led by volunteers are being held

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for girls attached to youth clubs; each class has 12 girls and each programme extends over 12 weeks.

- (6) Arts (Music and Drama): - 5 music groups covering orchestra, piano, guitar, harmonica and singing are being conducted by volunteers involving a total of 60 persons.

One drama group with a membership of 20, is being conducted by a volunteer.

- (7) Family to Family: This project is designed to help families that are in some form of temporary distress (e.g. arrears of rental, no clothes for children to go to school, etc.) both by channelling to them, where necessary, temporary financial assistance provided by another family in better circumstances, and also by arranging for a trained Case Consultant to help with necessary rehabilitation of the family - perhaps by finding a job for the breadwinner if he or she is out of work or by whatever other means may be appropriate.

32 such families have been helped by volunteers, who act as liaison officers with a panel of trained workers.

For these purposes, the National Volunteers accept referrals from sources like the University Hospital of the West Indies, the Jamaica Children's Service Society, the Catholic Action Centre, etc.

- (8) Know Jamaica Tours - 600 persons have benefited from this project so far. With the acquisition of 3 Volkswagen buses from the German Government, the National Volunteers have organised and planned lecture tours to historical sites and monuments in Kingston, Port Royal and Spanish Town as well as undertaken outings for Golden Age and Youth Clubs to various parts of the Island.

- (9) Community Hamper - This is designed to involve the whole community, who are invited to donate used articles, especially of clothing and furniture. These are collected by volunteers, rehabilitated in the National Volunteers' workshop and re-distributed through -

- (i) straight gifts in areas of distress
- (ii) the Family to Family project
- (iii) weekly sales at very normal prices.

This project offers a very real service to the community and many persons who would ordinarily refuse charity will buy a rehabilitated article at the very low rates charged. There are now 200 registered donors and several others contribute from time to time.

- (10) Woodwork Shop - This shop is used for making some of the equipment needed for the National Volunteers' programmes, e.g. table tennis tables and benches, as well as for rehabilitation of second-hand furniture received. It is constantly in use for these purposes, and has more than justified its establishment.

In addition, Youth Club members attend for training, especially during the summer holidays, and at least 6 boys have found employment in woodworking establishments as a result of the help received here.

- (11) Beautification Programme - National Volunteers undertook a beautification of 2 sections of the grounds surrounding the National Stadium as their contribution to the 8th Commonwealth Games.
- (12) Co-operation with other Agencies - 6 Volunteers have been provided to assist in Youth Clubs run by the Youth Development Agency.

4. In 1967/68, the National Volunteers will concentrate on strengthening and deepening these existing projects, all of which will be continued.

5. In addition, the following new projects are planned:-

- (a) Operation of the daily Feeding Programme formerly supervised and operated by the Kingston Charity Organisation Society.
- (b) Expansion of the scope of the Know Jamaica Tours (tours with a difference, attempting to show life in rural Jamaica, rather than the usual Tourist fare) by offering a series of such tours to other agencies, schools and businessmen.
- (c) Supplementation of the services offered by existing Voluntary Agencies, e.g.
- (i) by helping with transportation for the handicapped;
 - (ii) offering recreational programmes in Homes for the Aged (Ozanam and Eventide);
 - (iii) using Senior Youth Clubs as work groups rather than recreation groups (doing community service like preparation of playing fields in Housing Estates and simple repair jobs on school buildings, etc.).